

Ex. Doc. No. 34.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

PUBLIC BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS—EXPENDITURES.

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

COMMISSIONER OF PUBLIC BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS.

JANUARY 16, 1849.

Laid upon the table, and ordered to be printed.

OFFICE OF COMMISSIONER OF PUBLIC BUILDINGS,
January 8, 1849.

In compliance with the act of Congress requiring the Commissioner of Public Buildings "to make to Congress annually, at the commencement of the year, a report of the manner in which all appropriations for public buildings and grounds have been applied," I have the honor to report:

That the expenditures on the public buildings and grounds, and other objects committed to my charge and placed under my direction, as appears from the books of this office, from the 12th of January, 1848, (the date of my last report,) to the present time, have been as follows:

Expenditures under the appropriation for annual repairs of the capitol, from the 12th of January, 1848, to the 8th of January, 1849.

Salary of gardener and others.....	\$2,778 00
Pay-rolls (laborers).....	2,909 00
Hardware, blacksmiths' work, copper, stove-pipe, spouting, repairing tools, repairing gates, &c.....	450 95

Manure, straw, &c.....	\$142 50
Stone, sand, lime, painting, white-washing, &c.....	158 20
Carpenters' work, repairs on building, altering committee room, repairing pumps, repairs on roof and dome, &c.....	278 44 $\frac{1}{2}$
Glass, glazing, oil, candles, &c.....	49 74 $\frac{1}{2}$
Mats, baize, crape, coal, &c.....	24 08
Repairing furnaces, stakes, labor, &c.....	28 50
Erecting iron fence on Pennsylvania avenue.....	900 00
Lumber.....	14 14
Repairing engine house.....	84 71
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	7,818 27
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Expenditures under the appropriation for annual repairs of the President's house, from 12th of January, 1848, to 8th of January, 1849.

Pay-rolls, (laborers).....	\$1,881 24 $\frac{1}{2}$
Salary of gardener.....	450 00
Repairing water-closets, hydrants, hardware.....	143 99 $\frac{1}{2}$
Carpenters, cabinet makers, &c.....	58 62 $\frac{1}{2}$
Kitchen utensils, repairing of same, bell hanging, brooms, mats, &c.....	95 32 $\frac{1}{2}$
Attending to, and repairing clocks.....	62 00
Glass, glazing, &c.....	30 00
Carpeting, crape, &c.....	8 40
Sweeping chimneys, and sundries.....	14 21 $\frac{1}{2}$
Lumber.....	4 69
Painting iron fence in front of President's house.....	51 00
Repairing gardener's house.....	150 00
Manure.....	140 00
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	3,089 49 $\frac{1}{2}$
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Expenditures under the appropriation for compensation to four assistants, &c., from 12th of January, 1848, to 8th of January, 1849.

Salary of four assistants, (draw keepers).....	\$2,196 00
Lumber, spikes, &c.....	608 04 $\frac{1}{2}$
Blacksmiths' work.....	25 01 $\frac{1}{2}$
Oil, wood, repairing lamps, &c.....	152 57 $\frac{1}{4}$
Labor, (repairing bridge, &c.).....	102 38 $\frac{1}{4}$
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	3,084 02
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Expenditures under the appropriation for compensation to auxiliary guard, from 12th January, 1848, to 8th of January, 1849.

Pay-rolls, (watchmen).....	\$6,700 01
Oil, &c.....	27 94
Repairing watch house and clock.....	1 27
Wood, blank books, paper, &c.....	40 50
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	6,769 72
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Expenditures under the appropriation for lighting lamps on Pennsylvania avenue, from 12th January, 1848, to 8th of January, 1849.

Oil, &c.....	\$1,170 95
Salary of lamp lighter.....	185 00
Repairing lamps, &c.....	38 22½
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	1,394 17½
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Expenditures under the appropriation for repairs of Potomac bridge.

Unexpended balance of 1847.....	\$152 93
Expenditures	52 50
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Unexpended balance January 8, 1849.....	100 43
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Stone.....	52 50
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Expenditures under the appropriation for sprinkling Pennsylvania avenue, during the session of Congress.

Appropriation.....	\$1,000 00
Expenditures.....	120 37½
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Unexpended balance, January 8th, 1849.....	879 62½
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Watering cart, and repairs of same.....	83 37½
Labor.....	37 00
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	120 37½
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*Expenditures under the appropriation for grading, gravelling, &c.,
Indiana avenue, and constructing a culvert under the same.*

Appropriation	\$13,500 00
Expenditures	8,145 58 $\frac{1}{4}$
Unexpended balance, January 8th, 1849	5,354 41 $\frac{3}{4}$
Pay-rolls, (laborers, stone masons, carts, &c.)	5,055 16 $\frac{1}{2}$
Lime and cement for culvert	547 32
Sand for do.	154 37 $\frac{1}{2}$
Blacksmiths' work, &c.	139 61
Stone for culvert	950 35 $\frac{1}{4}$
Lumber for do.	124 45
Bricks for do.	1,140 00
Wheelbarrows and other utensils	34 31
	8,145 58 $\frac{1}{4}$

Expenditures under the appropriation for grading, &c., Four-and-a-half street.

Appropriation	\$4,750 00
Expenditures	2,648 95 $\frac{1}{2}$
Unexpended balance, January 8th, 1849	2,101 04 $\frac{1}{2}$
Pay-rolls, (laborers, &c.)	1,811 62
Blacksmiths' work, hardware, &c.	38 13 $\frac{1}{2}$
Flagging and paving	775 60
Lumber	23 60
	2,648 95 $\frac{1}{2}$

Expenditures under the appropriation for painting the Capitol:

Appropriation	\$20,000 00
Expenditures	5,059 73 $\frac{1}{2}$
Unexpended balance, January 8th, 1849	14,940 26 $\frac{1}{2}$
Pay-rolls, (painters and laborers)	2,221 04 $\frac{1}{2}$
Pay-rolls, (riggers, &c.)	156 12 $\frac{1}{2}$
Lead, oil, whiting, brushes, cans, transportation, &c.	2,357 98
Carpenters' work	49 35

Blacksmiths' work and hardware.....	\$33 15
Rope and blocks.....	179 70
Lumber.....	49 70
Sundries.....	12 68½
	<u>5,059 73½</u>

Expenditures under the appropriation for laying gas pipes:

Appropriation.....	\$25,000 00
Expenditures.....	10,397 50
Unexpended balance, January 8th, 1849.....	<u>14,602 50</u>
Paid on account of contract for pipes, lamp-posts, &c.	\$10,000 00
" for superintendence and other services rendered	295 00
" for force-pump and frame, altering and repairing	102 50
the same	<u>10,397 50</u>

Expenditures under the appropriation for removing the mast and lantern.

Appropriation.....	\$323 00
Expenditures.....	323 00
Pay-rolls, (laborers).....	187 92
Superintendent.....	75 08
Glass and glazing.....	30 91
Copper, &c.....	24 09
Stone cutting, &c.....	5 00
	<u>323 00</u>

Expenditures under the appropriation for grading, draining, &c., the grounds south of the President's house.

Appropriation.....	\$6,000 00
Expenditures.....	4,337 22½
Unexpended balance, January 8, 1849.....	<u>1,662 77½</u>

Pay-rolls, (laborers, &c).....	\$3,615 00
Sand.....	9 90
Lime and cement.....	22 57½
Blacksmiths' work, hardware, &c.....	56 10
Lumber.....	575 06½
Transportation.....	1 58½
Cedar posts.....	57 00
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	4,337 22½

Expenditures under the appropriation for enclosing public grounds, north, south, and west of the capitol, &c., including repairs of Tiber creek bridge.

Appropriation for enclosing grounds.....	\$2,300 00
Appropriation for repairing of Tiber creek bridge.....	1,500 00
Requisitions on unexpended balance of 1847 for annual repairs of capitol, transferred.....	3,944 83
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	7,744 83
Expenditures.....	7,744 83

North of Capitol.

Pay-rolls, (laborers, masons, carts, &c).....	\$446 12½
Bricks for culvert.....	284 00
Sand for culvert.....	8 10
Lime and cement for culvert.....	26 60
Blacksmith's work, &c.....	4 43
Lumber.....	11 03
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	780 28½

South of Capitol.

Pay-rolls, (laborers, carts, &c).....	\$4,025 67
Lumber.....	1 53
Ploughs, mould boards, &c.....	58 21
Blacksmith's work, hardware, &c.....	89 12½
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	4,174 53½

West of Capitol, including repairs at Tiber creek bridge.

Pay-rolls, (laborers, carts, &c).....	\$1,508 02½
Stone, and cedar brush.....	117 47
Lumber, freight, wharfage, and cartage.....	796 33½
Digging post holes, setting posts, &c.....	34 00
Blacksmith's work, hardware, &c.....	67 80
Cedar posts.....	120 00
Labor with wagon and horses.....	13 50
Carpenter's work.....	23 15
Trees, planting the same, &c.....	36 75
White-washing.....	48 48
Labor.....	24 50
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	2,790 01
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Recapitulation.

North of capitol.....	\$780 28½
South of capitol.....	4,174 53½
West of capitol.....	2,790 01
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	7,744 83
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*United States in account current with Charles Douglas, Commissioner of Public Buildings, on account of sales
of city lots, from January 12, 1848, to January 8, 1849.*

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1849.			1848.		
Dr.			Cr.		
January 8	To cash paid sundry bills.....	\$229 53	January 12	By balance of last account.....	\$325 57
	To balance.....	2,116 40	1849.		
			January 8	By sales of city lots, from Jan. 12, 1848, to date—67 lots.....	2,020 36
	<i>The following bills are outstanding, viz:</i>	2,345 93			2,345 93
November 19	P. Crowley's bill for paving Seventh street west, south of the canal, transferred to Samuel De Vaughan...	1,119 45		By balance.....	2,116 40
October 30	C. L. Coltman's bill for paving, &c., west of west gate of President's house.....	500 00		To cash paid S. De Vaughan..	\$888 33
November 25	C. L. Coltman for flagging and paving the public space at intersection of New York and Massachu- setts avenues.....	750 08		To cash paid C. L. Coltman..	942 32
		2,369 53			1,830 65
	On which bills have been paid to—			January 8, 1849.—Balance on hand.....	285 75
	Samuel De Vaughan.....	\$888 33			
	C. L. Coltman.....	942 32			
		1,830 65			
	Balance due to De Vaughan & Coltman..	538 88			
		2,369 53			

The improvements authorised by Congress to be made upon Indiana avenue, were commenced under my direction on the first of September last, and are nearly completed to second street; at that point the work was suspended, as the weather was no longer suitable for its continuance; but it will be resumed as early in the spring as practicable, and prosecuted with due diligence and energy.

Besides filling with earth a valley in this avenue, four hundred and forty-five feet in length, and twelve feet in depth, embracing its whole length from second to third streets, and one hundred and forty feet of its breadth, a culvert has been constructed four hundred feet long, eleven feet wide, and eight feet high from the top of its paved floor to the inside surface of the centre of the arch. The materials used in the construction of this culvert are of the first quality, and the workmanship is worthy of high commendation. The foundation walls are of stone, firmly laid in cement mortar, and sunk to a sufficient depth below the paved floor of the culvert to securely sustain the arch and the immense weight of earth upon it. When finished to the Tiber creek, where it will connect with the great culvert that will cross that stream, its full length will be eight hundred and eighty feet.

A part of the ground on the east side of Second street, that will be occupied by this culvert when extended to Tiber creek, is already excavated for its reception, and a large quantity of materials for its construction are at the proper point, to be used whenever the work is recommenced.

Four-and-a-half street is neatly graded from Maryland avenue to the penitentiary, and will be gravelled early in the spring. The cross walks are laid in a workmanlike manner with handsome stones, and a sufficient number of cross gutters, of the requisite width and capacity to receive and conduct off the water that will enter them at their several locations, have been properly excavated, and well paved with suitable pebbles. When finished, the beauty of this street will not be exceeded by any other in the city.

The improvements now being made upon the public grounds at the south of the President's house are steadily and successfully progressing, and will, when finished, it is to be hoped, meet the approbation of Congress and the citizens of Washington.

After the necessary observations were made upon these grounds, the plan of terracing them was preferred to the inclined plane—it being most economical, best adapted to their shape and condition, and best calculated to beautify them. The low ground will be reached by two terraces, each fifteen hundred and eighty feet long, four feet high, and seventy feet wide from bank to bank. From the foot of the second terrace to the surface of the low ground the earth will be gently sloped.

Fifteenth street on the east, and Seventeenth street on the west of these grounds, will be graded to their full width, and the grounds fenced as soon as the embankments have been completed, and are sufficiently settled to firmly sustain the fence posts.

It is to be feared, owing to the drainage of two or three sewers at the northwest corner of these grounds, which have deeply gul-

lied them, that their improvement, at this point, cannot be finished unless an additional appropriation of three thousand dollars is made by Congress for uniting these sewers, and extending the great one to the canal—the nearest proper place for its termination.

When these improvements are completed, the banks of the terraces handsomely turfed, and their tops ornamented with suitable trees and shrubbery, doubtless the appearance of these grounds will be widely changed for the better.

Maryland avenue, opposite to the public grounds, at the west of the capitol, has been graded to its full width, the side walk prepared for the reception of curb stones, and a gravelled foot way made upon it, seven feet wide, and extending from First street to the iron bridge.

The public grounds at the north and south of the capitol are also being improved. The southern portion is graded, and in every respect prepared for putting upon it a wooden fence, as soon as the high embankments, recently finished, are sufficiently settled to firmly sustain it.

Considerable labor has also been bestowed upon the northern portion of these grounds, but much more is required for the completion of the contemplated improvements to be made upon it. In addition to lengthening a culvert two hundred and seventy-four feet, which conducts off the surplus water from the reservoir at the east front of the capitol, a ravine two hundred and seventy-four feet in length, thirty-five feet in width, and ten feet in depth, has been filled with earth. As soon as circumstances will permit, these grounds will be terraced, fenced and planted with trees.

The long bridge, at this time, is so much decayed and wrecked, that, in the opinion of good judges, it cannot successfully resist, in its present condition, the destructive effects of another freshet. Many persons are surprised that its trestle portion withstands the pressure of the usual current of the river against it, as the mud is washed away from the lower ends of several of the piles, and most of the mud sills and *spur-shores* are torn from their fastenings. Two thirds of the stringers, on which the floor of the bridge is laid, are defective, and also several of the caps that support the stringers. Some of the piers under the high bridge are more or less rotten, and much settled. Both sets of draws, owing to the settling of the piers, and the wrecked state of the trestles on which they rest, are in bad working order.

With the bridge in this decayed and shattered condition, it is very certain that temporary and local repairs upon it will be of little consequence. To make them really valuable, they must be thorough and general. The defective and settled piers should be substantially cased with new and heavy timbers, or taken down and rebuilt, and the trestle portion of the bridge re-constructed, with water-ways of sufficient width to permit drift-wood of the largest size to pass through them without difficulty or obstruction. Similar water-ways should be cut through the causeway, and iron or wooden bridges thrown over them. In a word, every part of the long bridge should be promptly and thoroughly repaired, in

order to insure its stability in times of freshets, and to make it safe for all travelling purposes. I therefore most respectfully solicit the attention of Congress to this subject.

The two bridges across the eastern branch of the Potomac river, recently purchased by the government, will undoubtedly require extensive repairs to insure the safe crossing of heavily loaded carriages over them, which have rapidly increased in number since they were made free.

The keeper of the navy yard bridge informs me that many of its caps and stringers, on which the floor is laid, are in such a decayed state that new ones will be immediately required. He also states that the piles which sustain the superstructure are old and defective; that most of them have been pieced at low water mark, and still need further repairs. The floor of the bridge he reports to be in an unsafe condition, and the side railing quite rotten. In a word, that every part of the bridge is so much out of repair that the judicious expenditure upon it of several thousand dollars will be required to make it safe for travelling purposes, and to put a mile and a half of road, an appendage of the bridge, in good order.

From the representations of the keeper of the Anacostia bridge, I am convinced its present condition is such that it will require a considerable outlay of money to make it safe for travellers, as several of the piles, two of the caps, most of the stringers, and the largest number of the rails and base boards are so rotten that they must be removed and new ones put in their places, and the piles pieced or strengthened with side piles.

As the public grounds west of the capitol, where the Tiber creek passes through them, have been much injured by the destructive effects of freshets, it was deemed highly important to prevent, if possible, the further progress of this evil. Accordingly, the banks of the creek, that were perpendicular and falling, have been sloped at an angle of forty-five degrees, and three hundred and fifty-six feet of the east bank paved with round stones of a large size. The foundation stones of this pavement are laid twelve inches below the bed of the creek, and the pavement extended up the bank sixteen inches above high water mark. To prevent the washing out of the foundation stones of this pavement, and its consequent slipping down, suitable piles have been deeply and firmly driven into the bottom of the creek, bearing hard against the foundation stones, which are very large and deeply sunk in the mud.

Upon the top of this pavement a bank of earth is placed, reaching to the surface of the ground, and neatly turfed. This bank not only makes a handsome finish to the pavement that sustains it, but will prevent the water from getting under the stones or otherwise injuring it whenever the grounds are overflowed.

As the object of this pavement is to prevent the bank of the creek on which it is laid from falling or being washed away, that object will doubtless be accomplished if the foundation stones of the pavement remain firm and immovable, of which there can be

no reasonable apprehension, as they are well protected by the piles that are driven four feet into the mud.

Had the time permitted, a similar pavement would have been laid upon the west bank of the creek, as it was fully prepared for its reception. But as the work might have been injured and, perhaps, destroyed by freshets or other casualties, at this season of the year, propriety dictated that it should not be commenced until a more favorable period had arrived for its prosecution and completion.

|| The east abutment wall of Tiber creek bridge, that has been several times injured by freshets, is again repaired.

In order to have a firm foundation for this abutment, stones weighing two thousand pounds were thrown into the creek opposite to its broken parts, where the water was six feet deep. On these stones smaller ones were laid, and a level surface thus obtained, at low-water mark, for the new wall to rest upon. Should this foundation be firm and abiding, and it is certainly fair to presume that it will, judging from the character of the materials that constitute it, then this abutment will be, hereafter, a permanent structure.

To this abutment, extending back thirteen feet into the bank of the creek, is joined a sloped wall of heavy masonry work, thirty-two feet long and twelve feet high, which is firmly united to the pavement.

As a portion of these grounds, bordering on the canal, was rapidly being washed away by the action of Tiber creek upon them, and even the stability of the iron bridge across the canal would be endangered at no distant time, unless the progress of this evil could be promptly and effectually checked, it was determined that immediate action be taken in relation to it. Accordingly, the course of the creek was changed by cutting an additional outlet for it into the canal; and the south side of the outlet, which is most exposed to injury from high water, is protected by pile and stone work. A dam has also been built across the creek, in line with the pile and stone work, to which it is firmly united. This dam is only of sufficient height to turn the stream through the new outlet under ordinary circumstances. But whenever there is a freshet in the creek, the largest portion of the water will flow over the dam and through the old channel into the canal. As, however, such occurrences are rare, doubtless the usual course of the stream will be hereafter through the new outlet, and, consequently, the old channel will gradually fill up, and the further destruction of the grounds from this cause be prevented.

These grounds have likewise been properly graded, and neatly, substantially and durably fenced. One hundred and forty suitable trees have been already planted upon them; and to this number large additions will be made in the spring.

Soon after the close of the last session of Congress, all the necessary articles for painting the capitol were procured in the city of Philadelphia from manufacturers and venders of high reputation.

Deeming it prudent, while the weather was hot and the exterior

walls of the capitol were much heated by the action of the sun upon them, not to commence the work of painting, it was delayed until the weather had become cooler. It was then commenced and continued until every part of the exterior of the building received one coat of paint, and the east front, north end, and a portion of the west front, the second coat. Convinced that the uncovered part of the first coat, composed mainly of linseed oil and whiting, would be much benefited by a lengthy exposure to the air, which would thoroughly harden it, and as the working season was far advanced, I determined to suspend the work until spring, when it will be resumed as soon as practicable, and hastened to its completion with due industry and energy.

One coat of paint has also been put upon the iron fence around the capitol grounds, which has much improved its appearance and arrested the destructive progress of rust upon it.

As the paint used upon the capitol and iron fence is of the first quality, and has been well put on, the work when finished will doubtless possess the desirable requisites of beauty and durability.

The wooden fence at the north front of the President's house being much decayed and broken, it became necessary to have it thoroughly repaired, or removed, and a new one erected. Application was, therefore, made by me to Congress for the requisite funds to accomplish this object, and an appropriation of nine hundred dollars was obtained for the erection of an iron fence. M. P. Coons, esq., of Lansinburgh, New York, agreed to furnish and put up this fence for one dollar and fifty cents a foot, which he has done.

In common with all other public works, this fence has been subjected to the ordeal of severe criticism. It is believed, however, that its peculiar construction and general appearance are fast gaining for it the favor of sensible and judicious persons, and that it will be found far preferable to a wooden fence on the score of durability and economy. It is also believed that the chestnut-wood coping on which it is placed is better adapted to the style and finish of such a fence than the sand-stone coping which sustains the iron fences at the Capitol and President's house; and, especially, that it is less liable than the sand-stone coping to be mutilated and broken by that class of evil-minded persons whose highest enjoyment seems to consist in doing as much injury as they possibly can to the public property in this city, which, though paid for by all the people of this great republic, is particularly beneficial to the citizens of Washington.

As soon as time would permit, after the close of the last session of Congress, I obtained from the highest and best sources such information as was desirable respecting gas works and gas operations generally; I then contracted with the Washington Gas Light Company to lay the pipes and fit for lighting with gas the President's house, Pennsylvania avenue, and the capitol grounds. This contract was based upon estimates of the cost of materials and prices for doing the work, furnished by Charles Roome, esq., superintendent of the Manhattan Gas Works, New

York, and Robert Cornelius, esq., of Philadelphia, both of whom possess extensive knowledge of such matters.

The main gas pipes have been laid by the gas company on the north side of Pennsylvania avenue to the President's house and capitol grounds, and around and through the grounds to the gas works at the capitol, with which they are connected. A number of pipes have also been laid upon the south side of the avenue, but as the line is incomplete, they are not connected with the gas works. The pipes along Pennsylvania avenue are four inches in diameter upon the inside, and those laid around and through the capitol grounds are three inches. The iron lamp posts for the Pennsylvania avenue, and to be placed around the capitol grounds, were cast in this city by skilful and experienced workmen, and are much admired by persons of refined taste for their beauty and peculiar adaptation to their particular localities. These posts are already set on the north side of the avenue, and will be continued around the capitol grounds. The posts for the inside of the capitol grounds are now being cast and will soon be completed. They will be more massive than those upon the avenue and around the grounds, of a different figure, and perhaps less chaste and beautiful in their proportion and appearance. The lamps are of the same pattern as the lamps in the city of Philadelphia, and will ere long be placed upon the posts and lighted.

The chandeliers in the east room of the President's house have been removed, fitted for the burning of gas, and are again suspended at their appropriate places. This alteration and other tasteful improvements, which have doubtless increased their beauty and elegance, were made by those distinguished manufacturers of rich ornamental work, Cornelius & Co., of Philadelphia.

The other chandeliers, authorized by Congress to be made and placed in the President's house, have also been manufactured by Cornelius & Co., and will be suspended as soon as circumstances will permit.

By an act of Congress, approved March 3, 1843, the office of the Commissioner of Public Buildings was deprived of the services of a clerk. The cause of this deprivation it is difficult to divine, as it is reasonable to conclude that the services of such an officer were as useful to the government at that time as at any other, from the fact that the importance of this office, as an office of record, has been constantly on the increase since its organization to the present moment, and its general business has not diminished.

It is also a fact, not unworthy of consideration, that a large and highly important portion of the official duties of the Commissioner of Public Buildings is performed out of his office, during office hours, in the examination and supervision of public works. It is therefore obvious, as his in-door and out-door duties cannot be performed at the same time, that if deprived of the services of a responsible assistant, capable of transacting the public business during his necessary absence from the office, that it must be closed in office hours, until his return, most certainly to the disappointment and, perhaps, to the serious injury of persons, who, at such

times, make business calls at it to examine the records of the office in relation to the titles of landed property, or to transact other business, and where delay might be productive of very bad consequences.

In view of these facts, and of another not less important, namely, that the business of this office has been greatly increased by the legislation of Congress during its last session, I take leave, most respectfully, to solicit the favorable action of Congress in relation to the restoration to this office of its clerk, at such compensation for his services as may be deemed just and equitable.

The largest portion of the public work under my direction, has, thus far, been executed upon the days-work system, and in most instances with satisfactory results as to its economy and efficiency. The only difficulty in the way, both of the success and popularity of this system, is the erroneous, but too common opinion, that public work may, without any impropriety, be executed with less celerity, and consequently with less economy, if not with less fidelity, than work which is done for individuals; an opinion which, except to those directly interested in its maintenance, needs no argument to show its incorrectness, its immoral tendency, and its injurious effects upon the best interests of the working classes.

The public grounds, at the capitol and President's house, have received due attention from the superintendents and workmen employed upon them, notwithstanding the exceeding remissness of the gardener in the performance of his duty. These grounds will be abundantly manured in the spring, and no efforts spared to have them cultivated in the best possible manner.

CHARLES DOUGLAS,
Commissioner of Public Buildings.

times, made business itself to examine the records of the of-
 fice in relation to the rates of interest property, and to transfer other
 business and where delay might be productive of very bad conse-
 quences. It is not, however, the business of the Government to
 interfere in these matters of another not less important, namely,
 that the business of the office has been greatly increased by the legis-
 lation of Congress during the last session. I leave most re-
 spectfully to the able and honorable action of Congress in relation
 to the question of the office of the clerk of such commission
 and his duties as may be deemed just and proper.

The largest portion of the public work under my direction has
 been done under the day-work system, and in most
 instances with satisfactory results to the economy and efficiency
 of the work. In the way both of the number and quality
 of the work, is the error, but too common opinion, that day
 work is without any important benefit, and that it is
 inferior, and consequently with less economy. It is not with less
 its character, which is one for efficiency and economy, and
 except to those directly interested in its maintenance, it is not
 to show its economy, its normal tendency, and its in-
 fluence upon the best interests of the working classes.

The public works at the Capitol and President's house, have
 received the attention of the superintendent and workmen
 placed upon them, notwithstanding the existing conditions of the
 business in the performance of the duty. These grounds will be
 especially mentioned in the spring, and we are expected to have
 them cultivated in the best possible manner.

CHARLES DOUGLAS

Commissioner of Public Buildings